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They say, I say: “What’s the Recipe” by Adam Gopnik

The overall argument made by Adam Gopnik in “What’s the Recipe” is that the recipe to any type of food is experience. More specifically Gopnik argues the history, background, or anecdote that associates with food is far more valuable than the black and white recipe or the finished product. He compares cookbook to a grammar book and claims that it “miss[s] the social context-the dialogue of generations, the commonality of the family recipe”. Gopnik uses metaphor to suggest that cooking is not technical or exact, but it demonstrates a whole history and view of life. Food, according the Gopnik, is a way of delivering a life style.

I agree that the recipe to any food is more than the step by step instruction. Food represents the cultural, economic, and social aspects of a society. In order to make a specific type of food, it is essential for one to learn the origin or general background of the food. Simply following the cookbook and producing a somewhat alike result as the image in the book, one misses the valuable message that may hide behind the recipe. Although Gopnik may object that every food plays a role in this society, but I maintain my belief that all food portrays a different lifestyle. Therefore, the recipe is the knowledge or experience behind the words that led to the understanding of all aspects of food.

In recent discussions of food, a controversial issue has been whether food plays a vital role in our lives. On one hand, some argue that food represents the background of different groups. In the melting pot like America, food preserves each region’s distinction despite that people unconsciously assimilate to other cultures. On the other hand, however, others argue that food is simply essential for survival. Some say “we are what we eat”, what we consume defines our culture or background. Ultimately, the controversy is whether food plays a bigger role than a necessity to live.

I believe in “we are what we eat”. The food we choose to consume defines each individual’s character. I eat rice everyday which represents my preservation of Chinese culture. Other people who go on adventurous shows eat raw spiders which reveal their adventurous character. Some may object that those people in third world country have no food to eat at all. However, this scarcity of food would be a reflection of the economy and society. The topic of food is important because it often led to discovery, learning, and sometimes realization of what is happening nowadays.